



Governor's Task Force on the Outdoors: 2020 Framework for Action

Content:

Executive Summary
Membership & Process
Vision & Values
Goals
Strategies
Implementation & Evaluation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MEMBERSHIP & PROCESS

VISION:

We work to ensure communities and citizens thrive in every corner of the state by collaboratively developing policies, programs and practices that improve outdoor recreation access, encourage public participation, grow the economy and protect our natural resources with the conviction that in Oregon... We all belong outdoors.

VALUES:

Oregon Enterprise Values:

- Equity – Create and foster an environment where everyone has access and opportunity to thrive.
- Accountability – Own and take responsibility for quality of outcomes for Oregonians.
- Excellence – Collaboratively manage the resources we are entrusted with to achieve the best possible outcomes for Oregonians.
- Integrity – Be honest and transparent regardless of the situation.

Governor's Task Force on the Outdoors – draft value statements:

- We hold all forms of outdoor recreation on equal ground.
- We honor the unifying power of nature and aim to be unified in advancing our goals.
- We are committed to proactive and inclusive engagement to implement strategies.
- We aim to position Oregon as an outdoor recreation leader across the nation and world.
- We champion healthy, sustainable communities that provide safe and easy access to parks, natural areas, and special places for an improved quality of life.
- We commit to work with communities across Oregon in urban and rural areas by engaging the public and partners in local and regional outdoor recreation strategies.
- We advance an "all lands, all hands" approach to outdoor recreation, necessitating collaboration across traditional organizational boundaries and valuing contributions by partners in both the public and private sector.



- We recognize that recreation and development have impacts and embrace our responsibility to provide a healthy environment for all living things.
- We learn from our heritage – both the visionary outcomes and collective failures – and will innovate our approach to meet the dynamic needs of Oregonians.
- We define success as lasting, tangible, equitable results created and supported by sustainable partnerships, organizations and communities.

These are draft value statements that should be refined by the group. Additional statements could address: climate change, limitations in this plan, importance of education/outreach, recognition of the connection between outdoor recreation and other societal needs (safety, housing), building blocks of a successful economy outside our scope (broadband, for example), public safety, elements of the economy within our scope (including tourism, retail, outdoor gear and apparel etc...).

GOALS

1. Support economic development in both rural and urban areas
2. Balance improved outdoor recreation access with resource protection
3. Increase outdoor recreation participation, especially among youth and traditionally underserved communities

The goals above are our imperatives from Governor Brown. The strategies and preliminary actions below are integrated across outdoor recreation participation, economy and balance because these goals are inextricably linked. Some actions address only one goal, others primarily address one goal with connections to others, and still others will help us move towards all three goals. The preliminary actions included here are primarily combined summaries of concepts discussed during previous meetings. Mostly they are policy, legislative or structural concepts. Some projects and initiatives are included, though work to hone and prioritize that list still has to be done – this will include identifying roles in advancing projects. A final report would include icons (a person, dollar sign, and leaf for example) next to each final recommended action to indicate connection to our goals while maintaining this comprehensive approach.

STRATEGIES

1. Increase Investment
2. Catalyze innovative policies and legislation
3. Develop tools and resources
4. Evolve our organizational structure
5. Emphasize diversity, equity and inclusion

Strategy 1:

Increase investment in the outdoor recreation industry and in outdoor recreation infrastructure in this state. Enhancing quality of life, ecological resilience and economic vibrancy in



communities across Oregon will require maximizing both public and private investment through new mechanisms.

Decision-Maker: Oregon Legislative Assembly or voter approval

Preliminary Actions:

- Oregon Outdoor Trust – create a trust fund, potentially housed within the Oregon Community Foundation, to accept tax-deductible donations from individuals and corporations with financing analogous to the Oregon Cultural Trust, or consider matching donations 1-1 from another source. Grant streams could address priorities identified, but not passed, in past legislative efforts such as outdoor therapy (addressing public health and wellness), outdoor education (youth engagement and participation) or address other needs identified by the task force such as a fund specifically focused on equity, resource stewardship, or investments in new or existing infrastructure (combines #43, 51, 55 on 9/26/19 list).
- Dedicated Funding for Conservation and Trails – Oregon requires a significant, dedicated funding source for conservation and outdoor recreation. OREC should identify and propose a mechanism to establish a fund of \$100M+ that is backed by constitutional amendment without a sunset. A dedicated funding source would provide a portion of funds to land conservation and a portion to local recreation projects. A constitutional amendment ensures the reliability and longevity of funding. Including a sunset law and a provision not to supplant existing funding would be important for efficacy of the funding source (combines #46, 85 on 9/26/19 list).
- Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Grants – establish a new flexible grant program to provide matching funding for recreational infrastructure investments to local, state, tribal, and federal entities. Existing grant programs for outdoor recreation focus on discrete components (e.g., the Recreational Trails Program focuses on motorized and non-motorized trail projects) but are not flexible enough to address broader aspects of outdoor recreation infrastructure needs such as campgrounds, picnic areas, accessibility upgrades at existing facilities, or maintenance needs (combines #16,17, 45, 58 on 9/26/19 list).
- Recreation Industry Incubation and Accelerator Grants – provide funding to support Oregon's outdoor manufacturing sector through matching grants to membership organizations and business accelerators for the purpose of capacity building and technical assistance. The proposed program would help Oregon companies to grow in place and entice out-of-state companies to relocate to Oregon. HB 3251 in the 2019



Legislative Session addressed this need; the Task Force recommends bringing new legislation forward after consultation with stakeholders (#1 on 9/26/19 list).

- Continue funding for statewide Outdoor School program (#61 on 9/26/19 list).
- Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund - motivate outdoor recreation industry and Oregon's recreation community to invest in the Oregon Conservation & Recreation Fund. The Fund is a new opportunity for Oregonians to donate to implementation of the Oregon Conservation Strategy and the creation of new programs for connecting Oregonians to the outdoors through wildlife-associated recreation such as wildlife watching. Donations will be matched with general fund dollars up to \$1 million, allowing private donations to have double the impact. Action: support for ODFW's work raising and distributing funds to priority projects. Office of Outdoor Recreation Director may serve in an ex-officio role on committee; help with recruitment efforts (combines #48, 49 on 9/26/19 list).

Strategy 2:

Catalyze innovative policies and legislation that advance our goals of outdoor participation, balancing access with resource protection and supporting the outdoor recreation economy. A collaborative, unified approach focusing on root challenges as well as emerging opportunities is key to the success of this strategy.

Decision-makers: The Governor or Oregon Legislative Assembly could advance these proposals.

Preliminary Actions:

- Recreational Immunity – reconvene partners to address immunity and liability issues in Oregon and propose legislative improvements. While there has been recent legislative and legal action related to the topic, it remains a high priority area of interest to public land managers, private land owners and facilitated recreation providers. Issues to examine: efficacy of liability waivers for recreational activities; ensuring recreational immunity extends to public land managers as intended; consider extending certain recreational immunity privileges to private land owners who charge a fee for access (#12 on 9/26/19 list).



- “Equal Pay for Equal Play” – craft legislation requiring recreation events permitted by the state to pay out equal prize money across genders. Pay equity would become a condition for permitting recreation events on state land (#11 on 9/26/19 list).
- Pilot Outdoor Preschools – explore policy change necessary to make outdoor preschools eligible participants in Oregon Prekindergarten or Preschool Promise programs in the state to give low-income families more choices. A pilot program could first examine curriculum, insurance, permits or licensure and other issues currently preventing widespread adoption (#73 on 9/26/19 list).
- Search & Rescue – funding SAR programs, administered at the county level, will help to alleviate the financial impacts resulting from increased recreation. Acknowledging and funding county burden associated with outdoor recreation is needed to address community concerns related to expanded access and tourism visitation. Several partners worked to advance a bill in the 2019 Legislative session aimed at increasing funding for SAR (SB 448); a similar bill including a state matching component could be reintroduced (#42a/b on 9/26/19 list).
- Recreation Easement Tax Credit – extend conservation easement tax program to include private lands made available for public recreational use. Provide similar benefit through reduced timber harvest receipt tax to private forest landowners providing recreational access, with particular consideration for landowners that grant access to previously inaccessible public land, areas of special recreation significance, or for longer durations (combines #36, 44 on 9/26/19 list).
- Oregon Outdoor Pass – seek to combine Oregon State Parks Pass, Sno-Park Pass, ODFW Parking Permit into a single annual pass and pursue agreement with USFS to include the NW Forest Pass as well. This will require collaboration amongst agencies to set pricing, administration and revenue sharing that would require legislation to move. An interagency workgroup with private sector participation could be an appropriate group to carry out initial analysis (#75 on 9/26/19 list).
- Oregon Conservation and Restoration Corps – this proposal would create a program consisting of a two-year paid vocational internship wherein participants (age 18-25) would combine natural resource management training with hands-on restoration work at locations designated as high-need for restoration, conservation or recreation infrastructure improvements. A subsequent goal of this program would be to set up participants with the modern skills and experiences necessary to have a career in the natural resource and/or recreation management field. Participants would spend 8 months working on infrastructure projects and 4 months each year engaged in



classroom curriculum designed around the needs of recreation/land management professionals (#63 on 9/26/19 list).

Strategy 3:

Develop tools and resources that help stakeholders achieve their goals. There is an ongoing need to develop, promote and serve as an information clearinghouse for data on the social, economic and resource impacts of outdoor recreation in Oregon.

Decision-Makers: Oregon State Parks and Recreation Commission, partner commitments, or future outdoor recreation advisory group

Preliminary Actions:

- Recreation inventory and gap analysis – OPRD should be directed to conduct an inventory of every viable public space (federally owned, state owned, county owned and city owned) available for outdoor recreation. This work would be similar to the Parkland Mapping work but for dispersed recreation settings outside of urban growth boundaries. Most if not all of this data currently exists within separate agencies, or from private entities. Having this data – across jurisdictions, and recreation types – would enable us to prioritize planning and investment with a systems view. This project could also incorporate a capacity analysis to determine over and underutilized areas; a gap analysis to understand unmet public demand for recreation; and currently inaccessible areas which may be appropriate for public access or hold particularly high recreation value (combines #33,34,37,39,40 on 9/26/19 list).
- Advance Universal Design – evaluate public parks and recreation areas for accessibility, prioritize needs, and launch a funded plan to upgrade facilities to ensure equitable access for all. Part of this work would also be to better publicize current accessibility of sites and progress of upgrades. Another could be developing a Universal Design Best Practice Guide based on related work across the Oregon State Park system (combines #60, 79 on 9/26/19 list).
- Develop a statewide directory – outdoor recreation related businesses and non-profit organizations are diffuse, and additional tools are needed to aid in outreach and networking. This project aligns with needs from OSU Outdoor Recreation Economy Initiative, Regional Solutions, Travel Oregon, business and non-profit entities and direct stakeholder input. See PDX Athletic & Outdoor Ecosystem as inspiration. This project could also serve a need for a shared services network for small and medium sized companies (combines #6, 112 on 9/26/19 list).



- Remove barriers to Public Permitting Processes for Recreation Based Projects – A consistent statewide approach to permitting recreation-based projects would help expedite these development efforts in a cost-effective way while allowing park providers to have a better understanding of the time and effort their projects need for permitting. This would require input from park providers across the state in coordination with planning offices from each county. A concerted effort towards developing consistent state planning guidelines for recreation projects and trails would be developed and reviewed. Once implemented these would need to be monitored and recreation providers surveyed to see if the intended benefits were achieved (#14 on 9/26/19 list).
- Develop a simplified toolkit related to the special use permitting process - processes vary at the state and federal level, and across different resource managers which can be a barrier to the success of recreation providers. This is especially true for smaller or new programs whether for-profit or non-profit. Pursue this work in collaboration with Travel Oregon who have conducted past outreach and training workshops on this topic (#82 on 9/26/19 list).
- Ready, Set, Shovel – a guide for recreation groups to partner on a project from idea to implementation. This would be an agency-developed toolkit to help trails advocates in particular to navigate the planning, resource, funding, use and maintenance considerations that land managers follow for recreational infrastructure projects including both new construction as well as operations and maintenance (#83 on 9/26/19 list).
- With Business Oregon, develop outreach materials targeted to Outdoor Gear and Apparel businesses that provide an overview of the types of funding and technical assistance tools available from the agency. While most, if not all, of these tools are available to a variety of sectors, specific materials may help increase utilization by this target sector (#7 on 9/26/19 list).
- Add Oregon parks to the national ParksRx database to make it simpler for health care providers to prescribe time outdoors. This tool allows Oregonians, and providers to find recreation opportunities near work, home, or other frequented destinations. Utilize Parkland mapping database as starting point. Partner with providers and agencies to raise the profile of the health benefits of time spent outdoors (#74, 92 on 9/26/19 list).
- Develop a statewide framework and identify potential funding for K-12 outdoor education learning. This would build upon on the strength of Outdoor School, and include examining the Oregon Environmental Literacy Plan, Oregon Natural Resources



Education Program and academic standards. This effort could also seek to build on the Get Out There Together program to identify other opportunities for supporting outdoor recreation participation throughout childhood (combines #59, 77, 94 on 9/26/19 list).

- Support the development and adoption of Travel Oregon's "Plan, Care, Connect" Responsible Recreation Toolkit by tourism agencies, recreation providers, land managers and other stakeholders. Additional funding may be needed to continue this effort into the future, Measures of success should be developed (#41 on 9/26/19 list).

The initiatives included here are ten deliberative examples embodying themes that have come up several times in past meetings. The Task Force could select any number of projects or initiatives, which would then be organized based on what is achievable given current staffing and budget levels, plus what would be achievable if additional capacity existed. The key point here being that capacity and collaborative commitment, rather than a change in law, policy or organizational structure, is required to accomplish them. Some would be dedicated actions by a single entity; most are shared actions with partners such as through the Oregon Outdoor Recreation Network currently lead by Travel Oregon, First Gentleman Dan Little's Roadmap to the Outdoors and other ongoing statewide efforts led by the public focused on the many aspects of outdoor recreation in Oregon. A list of priority projects and timelines should be developed on an annual basis with input from stakeholders. The draft concepts generated by the Task Force include many additional ideas that fit this category, including all of #83-150.

Strategy 4:

Evolve our organizational structure to deliver on statutory direction for the Office of Outdoor Recreation to provide support to communities, serve as a convener, and champion solutions that ensure the ongoing success of outdoor recreation in Oregon.

Preliminary Actions:

- Outdoor Recreation Council – implement sub-cabinet level group focused on interagency coordination and planning for outdoor recreation in Oregon (ORS 390.233(3)(a)(B)). The group would be chartered with reviewing recreational statutes, policies, fee structures, and other programs or initiatives related to outdoor recreation with an ultimate the goal for recreation work in Oregon to flow from joint strategic direction, hence the need for ongoing coordination. Membership should be similar to agency representatives on the Governor's Task Force on the Outdoors, and expected



to meet every two months or more often as needed with the Office of Outdoor Recreation serving as convener (combines #27,28 on 9/26/19 list).

Action: Governor or Legislative Assembly

- Outdoor Recreation Advisory Board – carry forward a related proposal for an advisory board to the Office of Outdoor Recreation comprised of community group and business leaders to be established by the Oregon State Parks and Recreation Commission. Clear direction exists in statute for public policy development to include opportunities for input from the private sector and this would create the necessary forum to achieve that purpose. This group could also help further prioritize and make progress on the many potential initiatives and projects identified by the Task Force that may require coordination and collective efforts to accomplish (#88 on 9/26/19 list). [Action: Oregon State Parks and Recreation Commission]
- Outdoor Recreation Caucus – support and provide staff support to a bipartisan, bicameral Outdoor Recreation Caucus as a forum to discuss recreation issues with elected officials. Agency staff and interested members of the public would also be invited to attend to share information and discuss pending legislative and policy issues. The Caucus would not take official positions or lobby legislation. This group could meet weekly during the legislative session, playing an important role highlighting the benefits of outdoor recreation to Oregon's economy, our communities and our citizens (#104 on 9/26/19 list). [Action: Collaborative, based on elected official's interest with agency and non-governmental organization engagement]
- Support Community Outdoor Recreation Development – local elected and volunteer leaders, non-profit entities and private businesses across the state have identified a gap around technical assistance related to the outdoors. From identifying and helping secure federal and private grants, to understanding permit requirements and addressing recreational impacts, to implementing visionary projects there is a significant unmet need for broad-based outdoor recreation support in Oregon. This proposal does not require any legislative changes to occur but it does require staffing that does not currently exist within the Office of Outdoor Recreation or other state agencies. This team of "Outdoor Recreation Navigators" could initially consist of three FTEs assigned to areas roughly spatially defined as the Coast, Valley and Eastern Oregon and would work to support the efforts of the Office Director. A major focus of this team work would be catalyzing, convening and facilitating stakeholder processes that compliment rather than duplicate aligned work that is done through Regional Solutions and Travel Oregon (combines #2,3,4, 29 on 9/26/19 list). [Action: Commission, with Legislative approval needed for any changes in FTE dedicated to OREC]



- Engage on federal plans and legislation – maintain a list of federal outdoor recreation-related federal legislation of interest (for example: Recreation Not Red Tape (RNR), Restore our Parks, Simplifying Outdoor Access for Recreation Act (SOAR), Ski Area Fee Retention Act, Transit to Trails Act, potential land and water designations, funding programs such as LWCF, RTP, and agency appropriations) and determine through the Governor’s Office what opportunities there might be for the state to engage formally. This may be most effective if done on an annual basis as part of the state’s formal federal priority setting. A similar opportunity exists in collaboration with other state agencies to engage on federal land management planning processes – such as USFS Forest Plans and BLM Land and Resource Management Plans – related to the outdoor recreation participation, resource protection, and economic goals of the Task Force. These activities could be an ongoing piece of work for the recreation sub-cabinet if established (combines #84, 110 on 9/26/19 list). [Action: Governor]
- Convene a working group of higher education institutions in Oregon with outdoor recreation programs to identify gaps, overlap and opportunities for shared promotion. Aligned work includes collaboration with the state Workforce and Talent Development Board to advance industry-recognized, professional apprenticeship models that create career pathway. This could be accomplished voluntarily, though may be accelerated and strengthened through the formation of a formal task force established by the Governor or Oregon Legislative Assembly (#22 on 9/26/19 list). [Collaborative Action]
- Pilot Recreation Zone Management – Explore and propose a structure for recreation districts in the state to meet the need for coordinated management, promotion and technical assistance based on geography. This is an integrated proposal to manage recreation from a 50,000-foot level across agency jurisdictions, with a community as the hub. Issues and objectives are addressed by recreation type, with zone management essentially serving as the overall framework for individual land managers. [Collaborative Action]

Strategy 5:

Emphasize equity, diversity and inclusion as core values and as a distinct strategy for ensuring that all Oregonians have the opportunity to thrive through time spent in the outdoors.

Preliminary Actions:

- Designate public liaisons of diverse backgrounds – to facilitate input from diverse populations during planning and decision-making processes related to management of



outdoor recreation in Oregon. Intentional outreach should be conducted by paid staff or consultants (#66 on 9/26/19 list). [Commission Action]

- Establish diversity standards – recommend that the Governor establish guidelines for inclusion of people of diverse backgrounds and abilities on agency advisory or stakeholder committees that relate to public land and water management, rule-making, research and grant-making related to outdoor recreation. Agencies will apply this new standard, making nominations and recommendations after a specified date (#67 on 9/26/19 list). [Governor Action]
- Land Acknowledgment – fund and develop a plan with Oregon Tribes for land acknowledgement and history at all public parks, lands, facilities. Establish task force to evaluate existing information for bias or erasure; provide guidelines and funding for local agencies to do similar work (combines #19, 80, 143 on 9/26/19 list). [Government to Government Action]
- EDI Transition Plan for Agencies – government agencies are far behind the general population and even the private sector when it comes to hiring/retaining underrepresented communities (POC, disability, LGBTQ, etc.). For many of these agencies, simply encouraging them to hire more diversely isn't enough, there needs to be internal capacity building before non-majority employees can feel supported and meaningfully contribute long-term. A transition plan could provide a blueprint for agencies to undertake learning about their own agency's historical practices that have contributed to this inequity, internal capacity building, and eventually supporting new hires and leadership transfers to other groups. Start this work within OPRD, but could apply to all state agencies and include a requirement for robust EDI training program for state outdoor recreation professionals (#72 on 9/26/19 list). [Governor Action]

IMPLEMENTATION & EVALUATION

To be developed by the Task Force – outline below for deliberative purposes

Implementation:

- Provide options, akin to a menu, based on priorities selected by the Task Force
- Clarify roles, order of actions, lead/partner/support functions...

Evaluation:

- Measure changes to participation demographics in our next statewide outdoor recreation survey
- Measure change in Oregon's outdoor recreation economy – jobs, spending, tax revenue – including comparison to other sectors, in a future outdoor recreation study

- Conduct a follow-up cost of illness savings benefits study to measure change through time of health outcomes
- Create a metric for the overall efficacy of efforts in implementing actions outlined here
- Consider surveying Oregonian's values and perceptions related to outdoor recreation to establish a baseline and then measure changes through time
- For new grant funding programs measure the amount of outside funding leveraged, funded projects versus eligible applications, and

Content to include in a full report rather than an executive summary could also include:

Group Charter

Glossary of Terms

Governor Brown's Letter initiating Task Force

Guidelines on Recreation Funding

Full list of actions (including aligned efforts)

Background narrative (statutory direction; previous + aligned efforts)